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THE IDEA OF GOD HELD BY NORTH AMERICAN INDIANS.¹

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It is generally thought that the Indian believed in one supreme deity, whom he designated the "Great Spirit." Such a term was often used by Indians when speaking with white men. What was the nature and origin of this Indian "Great Spirit"?

The first thing to note and to remember is that the Indian has not one god only, but many gods. When he passes by a remarkable waterfall, he makes a prayer and leaves an offering. There are various rocks, caves, and other objects of nature that are approached with awe and presented with gifts. Father Brebeuf, writing about the Hurons in 1636, tells of a certain rock which they passed on their way to Quebec, and to which they always offered tobacco, placing it in the cleft of the rock and addressing the demon who lived there with prayer for protection and success.² When the Indian in crossing a lake finds himself in serious danger, he prays to the spirit of the lake, throwing an offering, perhaps a dog, into the water. When the sound of the thunder frightens him, he prays to the thunder-being for protection.³ When he needs rain, he directs his rites to the god of

¹ The Mexican peoples and the Eskimos are not included in this study. I omit the Mexicans partly because many of them had advanced in civilization so far beyond other natives that it is easier to study them separately, but also because there is a convenient geographical division between Mexico and the United States. The Eskimos present a race-type sufficiently marked to distinguish them from other natives of the continent.

² BREBEUF, on Hurons, Part II, chap. iii.; in "Relations of the Jesuits" (1636); translation in THWAITES, *Jesuit Relations*, Vol. X, pp. 159 ff. Cf. with this D. W. HARMON, *Journal of Voyages* (Andover, 1820), pp. 363, 364, and H. Y. HIND, *Red River Exploring Expedition* (2 vols.; London, 1860), Vol. II, p. 133 (on Crees and others).

³ J. O. DORSEY, "Siouan Cults," in the *Eleventh Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, pp. 381-5; MRS. E. A. SMITH, *Myths of the Iroquois*, in *Second Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, pp. 54, 55.

rain for thunder. Air and earth and water are alive with spirits, any one of which may be prayed to; but as a matter of fact certain ones are singled out for worship. Add to these the many animal deities, which are invoked even more frequently than those of the elements in the sacred formulas of the Cherokees.⁴ Among all the Indians we find particular species of animals and plants adored by particular individuals or tribes as special guardian deities, the famous totems of the Indians. It will be remembered that the Indian corn appeared to Hiawatha.

Bearing in mind that Indians are vigorous polytheists, we may study the character of the chief of these many deities. He is sometimes figured in purely human form. The Californians, we are told, called their chief god by such names as the "Great Man," the "Old Man Above," etc.⁵ The Dakota term *Wakan-tanka*, or "Great Mysterious," often used by missionaries to designate the supreme god, is applied also to the thunder-god, and probably to others.⁶ Among the Omahas, Kansas, and Ponkas the word used for "god" is *Wakanda*, "the mysterious" or "powerful;" but there are many beings addressed as Wakanda, such as the sun, the thunder-power, the ground, the upper world, etc.,⁷ and it is difficult to tell which is the greatest. But the sun may, I think, claim the pre-eminence with these, as with most other tribes.

The missionary Brainerd wrote of the Delawares:

I find that in ancient times, before the coming of the white people, some supposed that there were four invisible powers, who presided over the four corners of the earth. Others imagined the sun to be the only deity, and that all things were made by him.⁸

A chief of the Indians of the Potomac river said to the English in 1612:

⁴JAMES MOONEY, "Sacred Formulas of the Cherokees," *Seventh Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, pp. 340-42; cf. E. A. SMITH, *Second Report*, pp. 51-5, 112-16.

⁵STEPHEN POWERS, "Tribes of California," *United States Geographical and Geological Survey; Ethnology*, Vol. III, pp. 24, 79, 161.

⁶DORSEY, "Siouan Cults" (p. 366). ⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 366, 367, 372, 380, etc.

⁸JON. EDWARDS, *Memoirs of David Brainerd*, 2d ed. (New Haven, 1822), p. 345.

We have five gods in all; our chief god appears often unto us in the likeness of a mighty great hare; the other four have no visible shape, but are indeed the four winds which keep the four corners of the earth.⁹

This deity in the form of a great hare was a deity of light, whose house was toward the rising sun.¹⁰

Father Biard says of the Canadian Indians among whom he labored: "They believe in a God, so they say; though they cannot call him by any name except that of the sun." When the Jesuit asked an Indian priest about their rites, the priest replied that when they were in great need, he put on his sacred robe and, turning toward the east, said: "Our sun, or our God, give us something to eat."¹¹ An Omaha reports that when Indians traveled they extended the mouthpiece of their pipes toward the sun, saying:

Ho, mysterious Power, you who are the Sun! Here is tobacco! I wish to follow your course. Cause that it may be so!¹²

The sun-deity was thought to have use for things even grosser than the fumes of tobacco. A war captain of the Kansas about to make an attack on the Pawnees is reported to have addressed the rising sun as follows:

I wish to kill a Pawnee! I desire to bring horses when I return. I long to pull down an enemy! I promise you a calico shirt and a robe. I will give you a blanket, also, O Wakanda, if you will allow me to return in safety after killing a Pawnee!¹³

This Indian, like other people, pictured his god after his own image. His deity, we notice, was somewhat identified with the sun; but he was a man for all that. The same Indian who here addressed the sun would at another time address the thunder, the earth, or the mountains.

The sun was especially prominent in the worship of southern Indians. The Natchez called their ruler the "great sun," and said that his ancestor came down from the sun and gave them

⁹ WILLIAM STRACHEY, *Historie of Travaile into Virginia Britannia* ("Hakluyt Society," London, 1849), p. 98.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

¹¹ BIARD, "Relation," 1616, chap. viii; translated in THWAITES, *Jesuit Relations*, Vol. III, p. 135.

¹² DORSEY, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 376-8.

their laws and their sacred fire.¹⁴ The Pueblo Indians now profess the Christian religion, yet they hold to the old rites in that they still turn to the east and worship the morning sun¹⁵ and expose their infants to the sun at their birth.

Father Brebeuf reports that the Hurons address earth, rivers, lakes, and dangerous rocks, but direct their rites particularly to the sky, and adds:

It is really God whom they honor, though blindly, for they imagine in the Heavens an Oki, that is to say, a Demon or power which rules the seasons of the year, which holds in check the winds and the waves of the sea; which can render favorable the course of their voyages, and assist them in every time of need.¹⁶

The chief deity of many of the tribes was described as an animal. In one story from the Sioux he is represented as an eagle, who had a nest on the summit of a mountain. It is also said that he used to kill buffalo and eat them on the hill.¹⁷ Some writers speak of the Great Spirit of some of the Chippewas and Ottawas as the "Great Turtle." One adventurer describes the ceremony of invoking the Great Turtle, who gave his people information of value to them.¹⁸ The most common animal deity among Algonkin tribes was their chief god, the Great Hare,¹⁹ variously called Nanabush, Michabo, etc.; the latter name, Dr. Brinton says, originally meant a light god. The Great Rabbit was at the same time a man and the ancestor of the Indians. He was the creator of the earth, the teacher of men, a nature power,

¹⁴ LE PAGE DU PRATZ, *Histoire de la Louisiane* (Paris, 1758; three vols.), Vol. II, chap. xxiii.

¹⁵ J. GREGG, *Commerce of the Prairies* (New York, 1844), Vol. I, p. 273.

¹⁶ BREBEUF, on Hurons, in "Relation," 1636; translated in THWAITES, *Jesuit Relations*, Vol. X, pp. 159 ff.; cf. LAFITAU, *Moeurs des Sauvages Américains* (Paris, 1724, 2 vols), Vol. I, pp. 133 ff.

¹⁷ ABBÉ E. DOMENECH, *Seven Years in the Deserts of North America* (London, 1860; 2 vols.), Vol. II, p. 384; and CATLIN, *Manners and Customs of North American Indians* (Philadelphia, 1857; 2 vols.), Vol. I, pp. 218, 219.

¹⁸ ALEXANDER HENRY, *Travels and Adventures, 1760-76* (New York, 1809), chap. xxi. SCHOOLCRAFT, *Western Scenes and Reminiscences*, p. 457, writing of the Chippewas, calls the turtle their Great Spirit. From such reports we at least see how loose is the use of the term "Great Spirit."

¹⁹ See above (note 9). STRACHEY, on Potomac Indians.

etc. And yet he was by no means omnipotent or omniscient. From observing the spiders, it is said, he learned to make fish nets, which art he taught his people. He succeeded ill in trying to create the earth until the muskrat came to his rescue. Finally, his grave is shown by some of the Indians on Lake Superior.²⁰ But we learn elsewhere that he has gone to the east to abide, which saying suggests that he is a god of light.

The Great Rabbit god was chiefly noted as creator. The story is that when the waters covered the earth, the great rabbit was on a raft with other animals. They wanted dry land to abide on; so the great hare sent down successively the beaver and the otter, but without success. Finally, the female muskrat secured a bit of earth, from which the creator made the land. The great hare married the muskrat, and from their union came the human beings who inhabit the earth.²¹ There are several interesting things as to the creator's character to be noted in this story. He was a sort of demi-god, and both man and rabbit; he was the ancestor of men. He was not all-wise nor all-powerful. He failed in his attempt to create land until the muskrat helped him out. Another interesting feature is that the story represents animals, and water and earth beneath, as already existing. It does not tell us how they came into being. Some tribes say that this was only a second creation after a flood. The Montagnais of Canada told of an old forgotten deity, Atahocan, who originally created the world; they thought they recognized him in the Christian God.²² It is a usual thing for the Indian story of the creation to start out with a man or an animal already existing for the rest of life to start from. The Osages say that their race sprang from a snail, which turned into a man and married the daughter of a beaver.²³

²⁰ HENRY, *op. cit.*, pp. 212, 213; cf. CHARLEVOIX, *Histoire et Journal* (Paris, 1744; 3 vols.), Vol. III, p. 281.

²¹ D. G. BRINTON, *American Hero-Myths*, pp. 39-42; N. PERROT, *Mémoires sur les mœurs*, etc. (Leipzig and Paris, 1864), p. 12; LE JEUNE, "Relation," 1633; translated in THWAITES, *op. cit.*, Vol. V, pp. 153-7.

²² LE JEUNE, "Relation," 1633; translated in THWAITES, Vol. V, p. 153; and "Relation," 1634, chap. iv, in THWAITES, Vol. VI.

²³ GREGG, *Commerce of the Prairies*, Vol. II, p. 236; DOMENECH, *Deserts*, Vol. II, p. 393; LEWIS AND CLARKE, *Expedition*, edited by ALLEN (Philadelphia, 1814; 2 vols.), Vol. I, p. 9.

It is a puzzle to find the creator-god in this story. The chief deity of the Thlinkets of western Canada was figured as a raven. He was the creator-god, but there were men on earth before him, and he was born of these earthly parents. These were in darkness and want before he came, and stole for them the sun and moon and other things.²⁴ In him is pictured an Indian type of hero—one who can steal successfully.

Some of the northern Indians say that the first person on earth was a woman; after her came a dog; later, a big man came who made the lakes and ponds, and filled them with water, and tore the dog to pieces to make other animals out of. Over these he gave control to the woman and her offspring. The big man figures here as creator; but the story does not tell who created the woman and dog.²⁵ The Tinneh in British America tell of a great ocean in the beginning, inhabited only by a huge bird. This bird by its touch on the waters created the earth and its inhabitants, except the Tinneh, who were created by a dog (to them a sacred animal).²⁶ Some of these travelers say that this bird was the Great Spirit. This is a later idea tacked on to the old story. It is interesting to note in this connection that some of the Indians speak of the chief deity as a great bird who flies through the air, the flapping of whose wings is thunder.²⁷ These ideas of the Deity as a great bird present striking analogies with biblical ideas. A story of the Iroquois and Hurons tells us that the human race sprang from a woman that fell from heaven and lighted on a turtle.²⁸ This is interesting as being

²⁴ WILLIAM H. DALL, *Alaska and its Resources* (Boston, 1870), pp. 421, 422; cf. JOHN RICHARDSON, *Arctic Searching Expedition* (London, 1851; 2 vols.), Vol. I, pp. 405, 406.

²⁵ SAMUEL HEARNE, *Journey from Prince of Wales Fort to Northern Ocean* (London, 1795), pp. 342, 343.

²⁶ JOHN DUNN, *History of Oregon Territory* (London, 1844), pp. 102, 103; H. R. SCHOOLCRAFT, *Indian Tribes*, Vol. V, p. 173; ALEXANDER MACKENZIE, *Voyages through North America*, 1801, p. cxviii; JOHN FRANKLIN, *Narrative of Journey to Polar Sea, 1819-22* (London, 1824; 2 vols.), Vol. I, pp. 249, 250.

²⁷ DOMENECH, *Deserts*, Vol. II, pp. 397, 398 (Columbians), and DUNN, *Oregon*, pp. 125, 126.

²⁸ BRINTON, *American Hero-Myths*, pp. 53-8; BREBEUF, on the Hurons, 1636, Part II, chap. i; translated in THWAITES, Vol. X, pp. 127-39.

similar to the idea found in Christian literature, that there were heavenly beings before the earth was created.

There are other stories that show even more than the preceding how incomplete were the wisdom and foresight attributed to the creator. Creation was accidental, according to one myth reported from the Sioux, which tells us that the Great Spirit, taking a stone to hurl at a serpent, suddenly changed his mind and transformed the stone to a man. The man was, however, fastened to the ground until a serpent perfected the creation by gnawing him loose.²⁹ This and several other myths show that the Indian creator was either not wise enough or not good enough to do his work just right. A Chinook chief of the early part of the last century told a traveler that one deity created man imperfectly, leaving him with closed eyes and mouth, and immovable hands and feet. A second and more kindly god opened his eyes and gave power of motion to his feet and hands; he taught him also to make tools.³⁰ Some of the California stories represent the coyote as creator; others have another creator-deity, but say that the coyote gave man gifts that the creator refused. Indeed, the coyote is more worshiped than the superior god.³¹

The creator-god of the Indians rarely receives much worship. He is a deity of long ago, an ancient father, an exalted being perhaps; but he takes no interest in the present affairs of men. Colonel Dodge, who lived among the Cheyennes and other Indians of the plains, once asked an Indian "who made the world?" "The Great Spirit," answered the Indian. "Which Great Spirit?" asked Dodge; "the good God, or the bad God?" "Oh, neither of them," replied the Indian; "the Great Spirit that made the world is dead long ago. He could not possibly have lived so long."³²

²⁹ DOMENECH, *Deserts*, Vol. II, p. 384.

³⁰ FRANCHÈRE, *Narrative of Voyages, 1811-14*; translated by REDFIELD (New York, 1854), p. 258; and DUNN, *Oregon*, p. 126.

³¹ STEPHEN POWERS, "Indian Tribes of California," *United States Geographical and Geological Survey; Contributions to North American Ethnology*, Vol. III, pp. 38, 39, 61.

³² R. I. DODGE, *Our Wild Indians* (Hartford, 1882), p. 112; cf. BANCROFT on Aleuts, in *Native Races of the Pacific States*, Vol. III, p. 144.

The creator-god is usually limited in space as well as in time. The tribal stories tell of the creation of that particular tribe only, or at most of the red men in general. The missionary Brainerd says of the Delawares that

after the coming of the white people, they seemed to suppose there were three deities and three only, because they saw people of three different kinds of complexion, viz.—English, Negroes, and Indians. It is a notion, he says, pretty generally prevailing among them that it was not the same God made them, who made us; but that they were made after the white people.³³

J. G. Swan says of the Makah Indians of Cape Flattery: "They will not believe that the white man's god is the same as their great chief;" and adds that they will not accept Christianity.³⁴ Perhaps their thought was like that of a New England Indian who said to a missionary: "Shall I throw away my thirty-seven gods for your one God?"³⁵ The Indians frequently urge that the white man's God is good for him, but that they have their own deities which serve them better.³⁶

Yet more common is the idea that the God of the white man is greater and better than the Indian's god. Colonel Dodge reports of Indians of recent times that many of them could not tell who made the world, but some answered: "The white man says his God made it, and I guess it is so. I don't know who else could have done it."³⁷ Possibly these Indians had had creation legends, but had forgotten them. It is quite possible, too, that they knew their own myths, but were ashamed to tell them to a white man. The Indian's god falls in his estimation, as he himself declines. When confronted by a people greater than themselves, the Indians were easily convinced that their deity also must be greater.³⁸ We find similar ideas among all uncivilized and semi-civilized peoples; when the people show

³³ *Memoirs*, p. 345.

³⁴ *Contributions to North American Ethnology*, Vol. XVI, p. 76.

³⁵ WHITFIELD, *Progress of the Gospel* (1651); Sabin's Reprints, No. III, p. 16.

³⁶ BREBEUF on Hurons (1635); in THWAITES, Vol. VIII, pp. 117, 119; and DORSEY in *Bureau of Ethnology*, Vol. XI, p. 378.

³⁷ DODGE, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

³⁸ See ROGER WILLIAMS, *Key to Indian Languages*, chap. xxi, and LE JEUNE, "Relation," 1633; THWAITES, Vol. V, p. 153.

great power it is evidence that their god is a powerful one. Thus Israel felt assured that Jehovah, or Yahveh, was greater than the gods of other peoples, because his people had conquered others under his banner.

But in all our investigation what place have we found for the Indian Great Spirit or supreme deity? It is interesting to note in two modern vocabularies that the word given for "Great Spirit" or "God" means in one case "half-white man,"³⁹ in another "white man above."⁴⁰ Add to this the idea of a Sauk chief who thought the "Great Spirit had a human form, was white, and wore a hat,"⁴¹ and we have some suggestions whence the Indian got his supreme deity, or "Great Spirit." A story very suggestive at this point comes from Sir John Franklin and relates to the Dog-Rib Indians, a northern tribe. The Indians were asked what they knew of a supreme being; they replied:

We believe that there is a Great Spirit who created everything, both us and the world for our use. We suppose he dwells in the lands from whence the white people come, that he is kind to the inhabitants of those lands, and that there are people there who never die; the winds that blow from that quarter are always warm. He does not know of the wretched state of our island, nor the pitiful condition in which we are.

To the question, "Whom do your medicine-men address when they conjure?" they said:

We do not think that they speak to the Master of life, for if they did, we should fare better than we do, and should not die. He does not inhabit our lands.⁴²

After these questions we can the better understand why the Indians in councils with the white men use the term "Great Spirit." They are apparently thinking of the white man's God, and have come to claim him for themselves also. Thus they often say that the Great Spirit gave them their land, and appeal to the laws of the Great Spirit as common to them and to the

³⁹ Arapahos; F. V. HAYDEN, *Indians of Missouri Valley* (Philadelphia, 1862), p. 337.

⁴⁰ Cheyennes; SCHOOLCRAFT, *Indian Tribes*, Vol. III, p. 446 (authority of J. S. Smith).

⁴¹ WILLIAM H. KEATING, *Narrative of Expedition* (London, 1825; 2 vols.), Vol. I, p. 216.

⁴² JOHN FRANKLIN, *Narrative of Second Expedition* (London, 1828), p. 295.

white people. In spite of the fact that the early Indians, as the first missionaries tell us, did not believe in a universal supreme deity, it is surprising how easily they accept the monotheistic ideas of Europeans. They like to think of this greater deity; but they do not wish to give up their old rites, to cease praying to the sun, the earth, the thunder. We find the Indian under Christian influence reconciling his religion with his new ideas by describing thunder as the voice of God, and the sun as his residence.⁴³

Reports from the Comanches state that they acknowledge a supreme ruler, whom they call the great spirit; but in their devotions address the sun and earth.⁴⁴ This means that the Comanches have accepted the Christian idea of a supreme ruler only in a very superficial way. We see the same phenomenon among Indians generally. They will make new stories about gods and adopt Christian ways of talking, but cling to their old ceremonies; they still believe at heart in the old religion. We have noted above that the Pueblo Indians supposedly converted to Catholicism still perform religious rites to the sun.

In looking over the Indian vocabularies, and supplementing them by the accounts of missionaries, one sees that some of the missionaries called the Indian god a devil, and provided another name for God for the use of the converted Indians. One will sometimes find that the so-called Bad Spirit of the Indians is simply the chief Indian god, while the Good Spirit is one he has borrowed from the whites. The word given for devil in a modern vocabulary of the Blackfeet is a compound of the word for sun.⁴⁵ Now the chief deity of the Blackfeet was the sun. It is apparently the white man that has made a devil out of him. A Jesuit writing of a god of the Canadian Indians, says:

⁴³ MRS. E. A. SMITH, *Myths of the Iroquois*, pp. 52, 53; DE SMET on Assiniboinis, in *Western Missions and Missionaries*, pp. 138, 139; cf. DOMENECH, *Deserts*, Vol. II, pp. 397, 398, and DUNN, *Oregon*, p. 125.

⁴⁴ PARKER, in SCHOOLCRAFT, *Indian Tribes*, Vol. V, pp. 684, 685; and DOMENECH, *Deserts*, Vol. II, p. 387.

⁴⁵ Devil = *Gacople Natos*, according to J. B. MONCROVIE, in SCHOOLCRAFT, *Indian Tribes*, Vol. II, p. 494, while *Natos* is the word given for sun. Cf. PRINCE MAXIMILIAN, *Travels in North America* (translated; London, 1843), p. 260.

They call some divinity who is the author of evil, "Manitou" (this is the usual Algonkin Indian word for a super-human power or spirit), and fear him exceedingly. Beyond doubt it is the enemy of the human race, who extorts from some people divine honors and sacrifices.⁴⁶

This indicates one origin of the Bad Spirit or devil attributed to the Indian. The white man manufactured it for him.

We see a second source of the Indian's Bad Spirit and Good Spirit in the following words from the Jesuit Father Le Jeune:

The Montagnet Savages give the name Manitou to all nature superior to man, good or bad. This is why, when we speak of God, they sometimes call him the good Manitou; and where we speak of the Devil, they call him the bad Manitou.⁴⁷

Here the Indian manufactured his Bad Spirit from European material. Reports from several tribes tell us that the Indian's Bad Spirit or devil was an idea borrowed from the white men.⁴⁸ He had several deities of various evil characteristics, but none that were conceived as totally bad, before European influence.

Several of our early missionaries, in translating the Bible, used for God the word of their own tongue instead of an Indian term. Thus one Jesuit used the French *Dieu*, and John Eliot used our English word "God" in the midst of Massachusetts Indian words. "Each one," says an acute writer, "seems to think that God understands the languages of Europe better than those of America."

The limited power of the chief deity of the Indians is further shown by the fact that he was god only of the living. The future world is the abode of souls of the departed, a shadowy repetition of this world. The souls themselves rule there, or the disembodied tribe. There is sometimes a ghost chief, but he is a chief or God only in the land of ghosts; other deities deal with living men. The Delawares sacrifice to God for success while living, the missionary Brainerd tells us, but they do

⁴⁶ JOUVENCY, *Country and Manners of Canadians*, sec. iv; translation in THWAITES, Vol. I, p. 287.

⁴⁷ LE JEUNE, "Relation," 1637; in THWAITES, Vol. XII, p. 11.

⁴⁸ LOSKIEL, *Mission of the United Brethren* (London, 1794), p. 34 (Delawares and Iroquois); G. H. POND, in SCHOOLCRAFT, *Indian Tribes*, Vol. IV, pp. 642, 643 (Dakotas); DORSEY, "Siouan Cults," *Bureau of Ethnology*, Vol. XI, p. 371 (Omahas, Ponkas, Kansas, Osages).

not imagine that this will be of any avail for the future world.⁴⁹ The Indian soul makes its way to the land of souls by its own efforts, and gets in if it is strong enough and skilful enough to do so. Many infants and weak ones perish in the way. No judge awaits the spirits.

The chief deity of some tribes was the first ancestor; as such, his abode is the same as that of the souls of his descendants, but he does not play a prominent part in the myths of the future life.

Old Indian myths of visits to the other world tell of long and difficult journeys over swamps and through forests until the soul meets the souls of his people, who are sometimes presided over by a ghost chief. Modern stories from Indians who have been influenced by Christianity say that the Great Spirit or the Master of Life has charge of the souls. As they arrive at the world of spirits, he passes judgment on them, either directly or by some test of virtue in their way, such as attractive fruit, which he who eats is lost. These are Indian adaptations of Christian ideas.⁵⁰

To sum up, then, the Indian idea of God, we see: that they have many gods and are thorough believers in them; that these are gods of the various objects of nature—of sun, of earth, of thunder—or are represented by animals, including man; that some one of these deities may usually be singled out as greater than others, although by no means a universal omnipotent ruler; that the chief god rules over part of the world only, and does not extend his power to the future life; that he who created the earth is now out of service; finally, that the Great Spirit or Master of Life is a modern conception borrowed from Christians and adapted to Indian capacities; but is an acceptable idea to the Indians. They seem to be pleased with this thought of the universal divine fatherhood. It remains with us to recognize their brotherhood.

⁴⁹ *Memoirs*, p. 347.

⁵⁰ Compare the account of the future life in DE SMET, *Western Missions and Missionaries*, pp. 223–5, with that in the *Memoir* of BRAINERD, p. 347. Both refer to the Delawares. De Smet's account was written in 1855 and speaks of a good and a bad land of souls, with the Great Spirit ruling the good land. Brainerd's account, written in 1746, says that God has nothing to do with the future life—according to the Delawares.